

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is requested.

Claims 1-4 remain in the application. Independent claim 1 has been amended to define the invention more clearly in that the charging of information fee and collecting of the print fee are preformed separately. Claims 5-7 and 11-12 have been cancelled.

Claims 5, 6, 11 and 12 were rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Uchiyama et al. (US 7,199,893) as set forth on pages 2-5 of the Office Action dated June 18, 2008. Claims 1, 2 and 4 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being obvious over Okuda et al. (US 7,034,952) in view of Uchiyama et al. (US 7,199,893) as set forth on pages 5-10 of the Office Action. Claim 7 was rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being obvious over Okuda et al. (US 7,034,952) in view of Aoki (US 2002/0035546) as set forth on pages 10-12 of the Office Action. Claim 3 was rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being obvious over Okuda and Uchiyama as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Aoki as set forth on pages 13-14 of the Office Action.

Claim 1 of this application is directed to a wide area network printing system configured so that a contents server providing various information is operated to send print data to a document server via the Internet. The document server is operated to send the print data to a remotely installed image forming apparatus via the Internet to allow the image forming apparatus to print the print data. The contents server of claim 1 includes "data sending/receiving means which communicates various data including print data with a communications terminal of a user and the document server." The contents server of claim 1 also has "data storage means which stores the print data therein." The contents

server of claim 1 further has "controlling means which controls the data storage means to read out the print data designated by a command requesting printout of the print data and controls the data sending/receiving means to send the print data to the document server when the data sending/receiving means receives the command requesting printout of the print data from the communications terminal." Still further, the contents server of claim 1 has "information fee accounting means which calculates an information fee, other than a print fee, relating to the print data and charges the user for the information fee when the data sending/receiving means sends the print data to the document server." The document server of claim 1 includes "communicating means which communicates various data including the print data with the contents server and the image forming apparatus. The document server of claim 1 also has "storage means which stores the print data sent from the contents server therein" and "data retrieving means which retrieves, from the storage means, the print data designated by a command requesting transmission of the print data sent from the image forming apparatus." The document server of claim 1 also has "print fee accounting means which calculates a print fee in accordance with the number of copies of the print data retrieved by the data retrieving means, and stores the print fee as print-fee-related accounting data." Still further, the document server of claim 1 has "communication controlling means which controls the communicating means to send the print data and the print-fee-related accounting data to the image forming apparatus". Furthermore, the image forming apparatus of claim 1 includes "accepting means which accepts the command requesting transmission of the print data; transmitting means which sends the command requesting transmission of the print data inputted from the accepting means to the document server; receiving means which receives the print data and the

print-fee-related accounting data from the document server; outputting means which prints out the received print data; and fee collecting means which collects the print fee from the user based on the print-fee-related accounting data when the receiving means receives the print-fee-related accounting data from the document server”.

According to claim 1, an information fee relating to print data is charged in the contents server when a command requesting a printout is sent from a user's communication terminal. In other words, a collection processing regarding only the information fee with respect to the print data is performed in the contents server. Print data and a print fee (not including the information fee) then are sent from the contents server to the image forming apparatus via the document server and printing and collection of the print fee then are performed in the image forming apparatus. Accordingly, the system of amended claim 1 separately performs the charging of the information fee and collecting of the print fee. This aspect of the claimed invention and its advantages are explained clearly and succinctly in paragraph 0006 of the application.

The system of claim 1 includes means for calculating and charging the information fee that are separate of the means for charging of the print fee, i.e., the information fee is calculated and charged at the content server and the print fee is charged at the image forming apparatus. In this manner, charges are differentiated from each other and are affected by the contents or value of information to be provided, e.g., a print fee vs. a “rich contents” fee (see paragraph 0003 of the instant application). These fees can be charged to different accounts.

In contrast to the claimed invention, the print service server 100 of Okuda et al. includes the fee computer 408 that calculates the amount of fee to be charged with

respect to a job result. However, the fee computer 408 of Okuda et al. does not charge by counting only the information fee. The fee collecting device 302 of the Uchiyama et al. reference is provided in the MFP (multi-function product) 301. Further, the fee collecting device 302 of Uchiyama et al. collects both the information fee and print fee at one time. Specifically, the portion of Uchiyama et al., extending from column 21, line 59 to column 22, line 3 explains that the print request administration server 105 performs fee collection administration of the fee collecting device 302, so that a print manager or administrator can determine the fee to be paid to the provider of the contents that has been printed, so that the fee for use of the contents information can be paid to the provider before coins in the fee collecting device 302 are collected. However, even focusing on this part, the fee collection device 302 of Uchiyama et al. does not disclose or suggest a configuration for charging an information fee and collecting a print fee separately. Thus, although Okuda et al. discloses the fee computer 408, and Uchiyama et al. discloses the fee collecting device 302, merely combining the references does not lead to the invention of amended claim 1 where charging the information fee and collecting the print fee are performed separately. Therefore, it is submitted respectfully that amended claim 1 is not suggested by Okuda et al. and Uchiyama et al. alone or in any combination and is condition for allowance. Furthermore, claims 2-4 depend, either directly or indirectly, from amended claim 1 and are patentable for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to amended claim 1.

In addition, the contents server of claim 3 also sends, to the document server, rich contents in which additional information is added to the print data sent to the communications terminal of the user. The contents server of claim 3 controls the information fee accounting means to charge the user for an information fee relating to the

additional-information-included print data (e.g., rich contents) by adding a surcharge when the data sending/receiving means sends the additional-information-included print data to the image forming apparatus. This aspect of the invention is not disclosed in Aoki. Rather, the part of the Aoki reference cited by the Examiner merely discloses that contents are sent to the cellular phone 10. A part of a basic monthly charge of Aoki is distributed to a cellular phone company, and a remainder is distributed to a print function provider. None of Okuda et al., Uchiyama et al. or Aoki discloses charging an information fee and surcharge for additional-information-included print data (rich contents) separately from collecting a print fee. Therefore, claim 3 is not suggested by Okuda et al., Uchiyama et al. and Aoki for these reasons as well as for the reasons presented with respect to claim 1.

In view of the preceding amendments and remarks, it is submitted that the invention defined by the original and amended claims herein is directed to patentable subject matter, and allowance is solicited. The Examiner is urged to contact applicants' attorney at the number below to expedite the prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,



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